



Town of Warren, Rhode Island

Minutes of the Economic Development Board

The Town of Warren, RI Economic Development Board met at a Regular Meeting on September 26, 2011 at 6:00 p.m. at Town Hall, located at 514 Main Street. The presiding officer was Sara Volino. Board members present were Paula Silva, Karen Dionne, Brandt Heckert, Kate Dickson, Spencer Morris, Joel Cary, Darcy DaCosta, and Mark Lombardi. Ex officio member Caroline Wells was absent. Both Hiram Jamiel and Town Manager Richard Paduch were in attendance for a presentation on parking. Kristin MacDonald was present at the meeting to serve as Secretary to the EDB.

The meeting was called to order at 6:00 p.m.

1. Review and Approval of Minutes from the Regular Meeting of August 22, 2011

The minutes from the regular meeting held on August 22 were reviewed by the members via email. Ms. Dickson made a motion to accept the minutes, the motion was seconded by Ms. Dionne, and all members were in favor.

2. Presentation by Hiram Jamiel regarding the parking lot between Child Street and Market Street

Mr. Jamiel has recently purchased the former Bank of America on Main Street and made a presentation to the Board regarding the parking lot between Child and Market Streets. When the building was the property of Bank of America there was an agreement with the town for the use of 14 parking spaces. Mr. Jamiel, estimating that it will take up to five or six years to rent the building, would like to rework the agreement with the town to lease the 30 available parking spaces (twelve spaces would be allocated for the building) for public parking. He noted that Bank of America will continue to lease (for an undisclosed sum) the space for the ATM machine in the parking lot. Mr. Jamiel proposed a triple net lease at the rate of \$1.67 per space per day based on 30 spaces which equates to \$1500 per month or \$18,000 per year. According to the terms of the lease, the Town would be responsible for maintaining the lot, including snow removal and asphalt repair.

The Board had several questions about this proposal. Ms. Silva asked Mr. Jamiel about privatizing the parking lot; his response was that he would need to charge higher rates to cover labor costs and enforcement. The Board questioned its ability to judge this proposal accurately without the knowledge of comparable parking venues in other towns. Mr. Paduch stated that the use of the lot by the Town would cost \$26,000 in its first operating

year (followed by \$18,000 for subsequent operation years); he also remarked that the lot has the potential to generate income for the town and could in the long term become a self sustaining operation. He said the next step for the EDB would be to make a recommendation to Town Council based on this presentation at the October meeting. Mr. Jamiel and Mr. Paduch left the meeting at this time. Ms. Volino requested that the Board further discuss this item as part of the agenda item regarding the parking survey workgroup.

3. Discussion and Approval of an art exhibition by local artists in Town Hall (Silva)

Ms. Silva reported that the Warren Arts Initiative is sponsoring a photographic exhibit by local artists in Town Hall.

4. Update on the creation of a business retention plan (Lombari)

Mr. Lombari reported that he has been in contact with Victor Barros and Paul Harden from the RIEDC. He is in the process of meeting with them to learn more about the benefits of the state's business enterprise zone program as well as tax incentives for business owners. Mr. Lombari said would like to meet with people from other towns to learn more about successful business incentive programs in other communities. The Board discussed the issue of inconsistent planning and zoning laws. Ms. Volino suggested inviting Tony De Sisto to the October EDB meeting; Mr. Lombari agreed to email Mr. DeSisto. Mr. Morris agreed to meet with Caroline Wells to discuss current tax stabilization programs in Warren. He agreed to report on this issue at the October meeting.

5. Update on Parking Signage program (Dionne)

According to Ms. Dionne, the parking signs are not ready because of a miscommunication between Silktone Graphics and the Town Manager. Apparently Silktone was unable to start the job because they had not received a work order from the Town Manager. Ms. Dionne reported that Mr. Paduch's office is sending a work order to Silktone and the project is back on track. Ms. Volino urged Ms. Dionne to use email to document her communication with the different parties in this project. Ms. Dionne said she would make certain to use dated emails going forward with the parking signage program.

6. Update on RIPTA bus shelter program (Dickson)

Regarding the RIPTA bus shelter program, Ms. Dickson reported that funding will be determined in the upcoming fiscal year. Ms. Dickson said she will update the Board on the program's future in the spring on 2012.

7. Update and discussion of parking survey with parking workgroup (Heckert, Dickson, Cary)

The parking workgroup gave an update on the parking survey and plan. Mr. Heckert reported that he has been working on a survey of privately owned lots with underutilized spaces. Ms. Dickson has been examining ways to improve public street parking, such as

delineation and improved signage. The Board also discussed the use of resident stickers, metered parking, and the issue of enforcement. The workgroup plans to study how other municipalities have dealt with parking issues. Ms. Volino reminded the workgroup that a RWU intern might be available to assist the group. The parking workgroup will present its research and make a recommendation to Town Council in November.

The Board further discussed Mr. Jamiel's parking presentation. The Board discussed the cost of the leasing the lot, and considered whether the lot was used primarily by merchants or as resident overnight parking. The Board also discussed the possibility of the parking lot being privately operated. The Board agreed that it would be premature for the Board to make a recommendation before the parking study is completed. Mr. Heckert made a motion to postpone a recommendation to Town Council regarding Mr. Jamiel's proposal for the former Bank of America parking lot until the parking survey is completed, Mr. Morris seconded the proposal, and all members were in favor.

A motion was made to adjourn, the motion was seconded, and all members were in favor.

The meeting adjourned at 8:10 p.m.

Respectfully Submitted,

Kristin M. MacDonald

Minutes submitted by Kristin MacDonald
October 12, 2011

